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THE HOUSE

THE BED.

II.

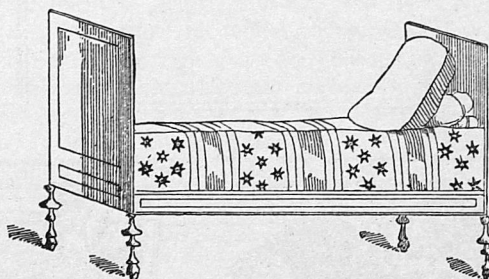


AST month, in the short sketch given of the history of the bed, we were unable to introduce as many models of the different styles alluded to as we desired. A second article therefore seems necessary, in order to place before our readers a sufficient number of examples worthy of study and perhaps of imitation. This is especially the case with regard to the eighteenth century style, imitations of which are now so much in vogue with us, and the antique, which has been studied with good results of late years in England. Something further will also be said of the beds of the Renaissance.

The beds of the Greeks and Romans were models of simplicity and elegance, as unlike as possible to the pseudo classic furniture of the first French Empire. The style which then became fashionable, though supposed by its originators to be distinguished by classic simplicity, was in reality based on late Roman models already tainted with barbarism. Little attention was paid to the paintings on vases which might have given birth to a much lighter and more graceful style. That the reader may form a correct notion of the prevailing clumsiness of the mode we add another bed, that of Napoleon I., and an alcove with draperies, arranged in the most tasteless fashion possible. Let the reader turn from these sarcophagi in mahogany to the beds actually used by those "ancients" whose ideas the French designers of the early part of this century supposed that they were following. The little Roman bed, copied from a Pompeiian wall-painting, is simple enough for the severest taste, and would meet all the requirements of modern hygiene. It might, indeed, be taken just as it stands as a design to be carried out in any hard light wood, or, with a few obvious changes, in brass or iron. The pattern of stripes and stars on the counterpane is one of which the ancients were very fond for the purpose, if we may take the humorous modifications of it found in vase paintings for evidence. That it may seem to have a certain resemblance to the flag of our country does not detract from its appropriateness.

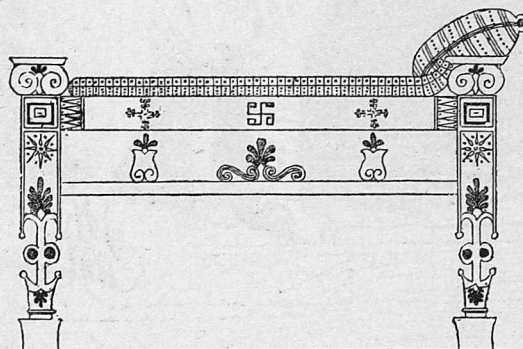
The high Greek bed which we show is much more

decorated a bed to sleep in if they should have thought of doing so with any approach to the luxury of modern times. Both the workmanship and the material of these festival couches were often of the most expensive sort.



ANCIENT ROMAN BED.

Supports of solid ivory, or of ebony inlaid with ivory, gold and silver, or of bronze cast in beautiful forms and damascened with the precious metals, or inlaid with enamels, were not uncommon among the wealthy, and Persian carpets of the costliest sort were piled on for mattresses.



ANCIENT GREEK BED.

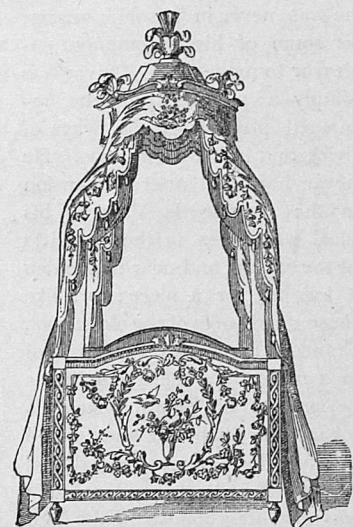
But with all this expense, increased very much by the skill and taste required of the workmen, who were often brought great distances, as from Athens to Thrace or Macedonia, it will be seen that there could have been no overpowering display of mere wealth in working out such a design as this.

Certain writers on this subject are, however, at fault when they assume that the classic examples such as those which we give were the models universally followed by the ancient Greeks and Romans. The bed of Ulysses described in the Odyssey appears to have been built into the timber work of the bedchamber. So that the old-fashioned four-poster may be yet older than it is generally supposed to be. The carved German Renaissance bed, with its lambrequins all around and curtains at the foot only, is evidently but a variation of this monumental style of bed. Later in the Renaissance period the woodwork became much lighter, and at length disappeared except in the bed proper, the style, at its best, being shown passably well in the Louis XIV. bed in embroidered canvas, to which reference was made in our former article.

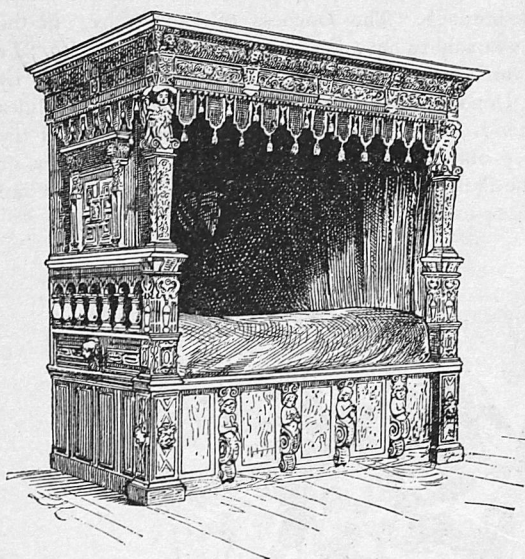
A bed of a somewhat earlier period though similar in construction, at Cavallazzo, in Italy, has been made the subject of a long article in the Gazette des Beaux Arts by G. D'Adda, who attributes the designs of the embroidery upon it to Giovanni da Udine, "under the immediate inspiration of Raphael," and the workmanship to members of his family. It was certainly a very gorgeous affair in its time and well worthy of some attention, especially as showing how the same

design may be modified to suit various shapes when the process of manufacture is a free one, like hand-embroidery. The bed has a canopy like that of the Louis XIV. bed which we show, not supported by pillars but suspended to the ceiling.

From it depended four instead of two half curtains, or "pentes," cut so as to make sharp corners and so heavy with embroidery that they hang perfectly straight. Inside the lambrequin of the canopy runs a metal rod which supports by means of rings the real curtains. All of these, as well as the coverlet and the dossier, or cloth to cover the head of the bed, are in damask of two tones of light blue, the figure outlined in gold. The lambrequins, the edges of the half curtains and the dossier have broad pieces of deep blue velvet, now turned greenish with age, applied, and it is on this velvet that the characteristic embroidery has been done. The pattern consists of a grotesque winged female figure terminating in foliage and supported on either side by winged griffins of the same nature. Draperies and chains of jewels are introduced to fill up. All this is embroidered in colored silks and gold, the stitches being taken very long, so as to get over the ground quickly. The relief was then given by a few strong washes of bistre applied with a short stiff brush, so that it has acted almost as a dye, and is still quite apparent. Over the whole was then drawn a veil of thin silk, which softens the somewhat harsh look of the painted embroidery, and, at the same time, has most effectually preserved it. This is bound down at the edges of the embroidery and cut away from the background and the smaller details. The

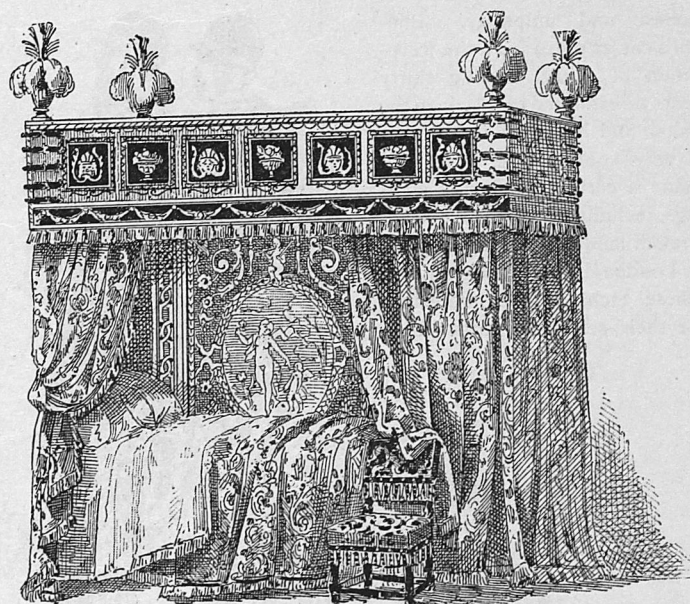


BED OF THE DAUPHIN, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.



LATE GERMAN GOTHIC BED.

ornate, though yet simple. It is a bed for reclining on at meals, and is therefore shorter than the body, the person occupying it, if a man, supporting himself on his elbow placed on the cushion or pillow. Women sat on the edge. Still, it may serve to show how the Greeks would have

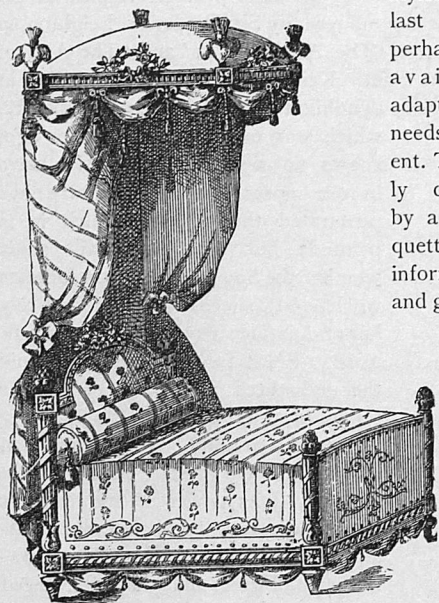


BED DRAPED IN LOUIS TREIZE STYLE.

effect of this glaze of silk gauze over the vigorous modeling of the little figures is said to be wonderfully beautiful. As will be seen by referring to the engravings, the same motive has been used throughout, and that but slight changes, mostly of scale, have been needed to fit it to

very different spaces. One may imagine the appearance of a room which has been entirely decorated in this manner.

But of all past styles that of the last century is perhaps the most available for adaptation to the needs of the present. Though easily distinguished by a certain coquettish elegance, informal, pretty, and gay, from the beds of all other periods, those of the eighteenth century are not without plenty of variety among themselves, and one must be difficult to please who

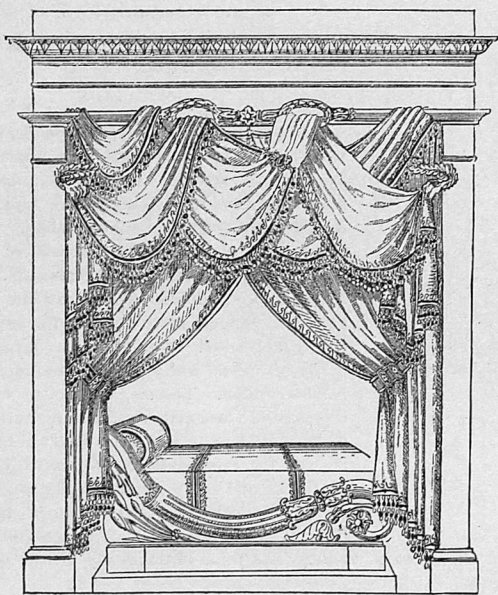


FRENCH EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BED.

can find nothing suggestive in any of the examples which we give here and on the preceding page.

A LONDON HOUSE.

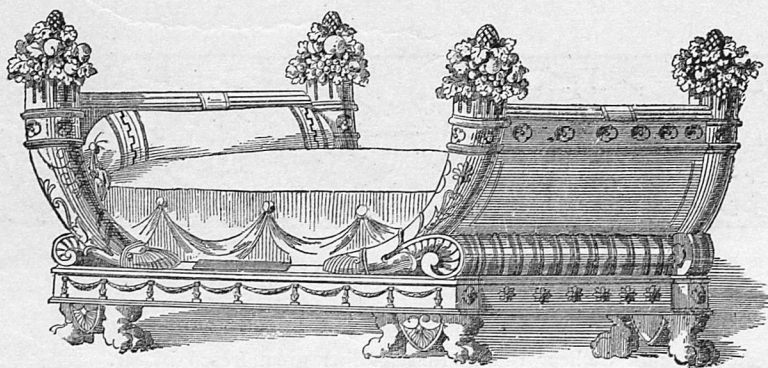
IN London there is an unpretentious-looking house, not far from the Marble Arch, which is a very successful example of the work of Messrs. H. and J. Cooper. It



ALCOVE EMPIRE BED (NINETEENTH CENTURY).

is thus described by The Artist: "From the gleaming brass knockers on the door to the bright cheerfulness of the top bedroom the house is a typical example of the beauty and skill which is now bestowed on the adornment of the house. Passing through a passage—the long, narrow neck characteristic of the London house of the period of barbarianism which immediately preceded the recent Queen Anne and Elizabethan revival—we come into a hall at once peaceful, roomy and full of color. From one side rises a broad staircase, from another two open doors open into the dining-room. The hall is Oriental in every respect. At the end is the organ in a case of Oriental lattice-work, with a Turkish mosque lamp suspended over the seat, which is on a raised dais, and throwing a subdued but sufficient light on the music board. To the right hand and between the organ and the staircase is a corner window of colored glass, making a niche which is floored with yellow rush matting strewn with

Kurdistan rugs. A blue and white Persian porcelain stand supports a tapering bronze vase and other curios, all partly hidden from sight by a hanging rush and bead curtain of Chinese origin. To the left of the organ is a large open fireplace, tiled with blue and white Persian subject tiles, all enclosed in a dark oak mantel, with corners and ledges for Eastern curios and rarities. Between this and the dining-room doors are low divan seats spread over with rich-toned saddle-bags. From a diapered ceiling hangs a large mosque lamp with its many little burners twinkling through colored glass. The wall is papered with old gold stamped leather paper above a blue and yellow matting dado. Again we have the yellow rush matting on the floor and Oriental rugs strewn about. Through large carved oak double doors, with stained glass lights above, we enter the dining-room, and the change is marked, but not too abrupt. The style is early French. Gray and blue tapestry hangings cover the walls above a dark oak dado. There is a richly carved deep fireplace, with blue tiles, and the floor is of dark polished oak. The hangings by the windows are of deep blue velvet pile, and the windows themselves have half curtains. Still the room is not dark, but has that subdued light necessary for this apartment. The ceiling is ribbed with oak, the intervening squares being filled in with embossed leather. A bold brass bracket-lamp of globular form projects from the wall on either side of the doorway, and an old French standard clock ticks drowsily in the corner. Up a broad staircase of old Cairo lattice-work, papered with brown and gold, the window on the landing being of stained glass, faced with smaller lattice-work, over a carpet of Turkish rugs, we go to the boudoir, a comfortable compartment with many low and inviting chairs, and a window, the light from which is transmitted through Madras figured muslin; we lift a rich *portière* hanging from the centre of a triple-arched white wood screen, and pass into the drawing-room, a light, rich apartment. Ivory is the color scheme for the woodwork. The walls are covered with light silk damask figured in panels. Candle branched brackets project from the walls, and there is a gold and light blue frieze, the ceiling being covered with embossed paper of slightly indicated design. A Venetian engraved glass mirror of good form stands on the mantel-shelf, draped with maroon plush in easy folds, looped with silver tassels. The fireplace below is screened by a mirror, the face being all but hidden by richly foliated ferns. There is a remarkable and praiseworthy absence of mirrors in this and all the rooms. The floor is of light oak parquet—the one mistake. In the corner is a large standard five-feet glass *épergne* filled with apple and cherry blossoms. The furniture is of the general inviting and heterogeneous kind—Chippendale, French, and what not, with here and there 'Bartolozzi'



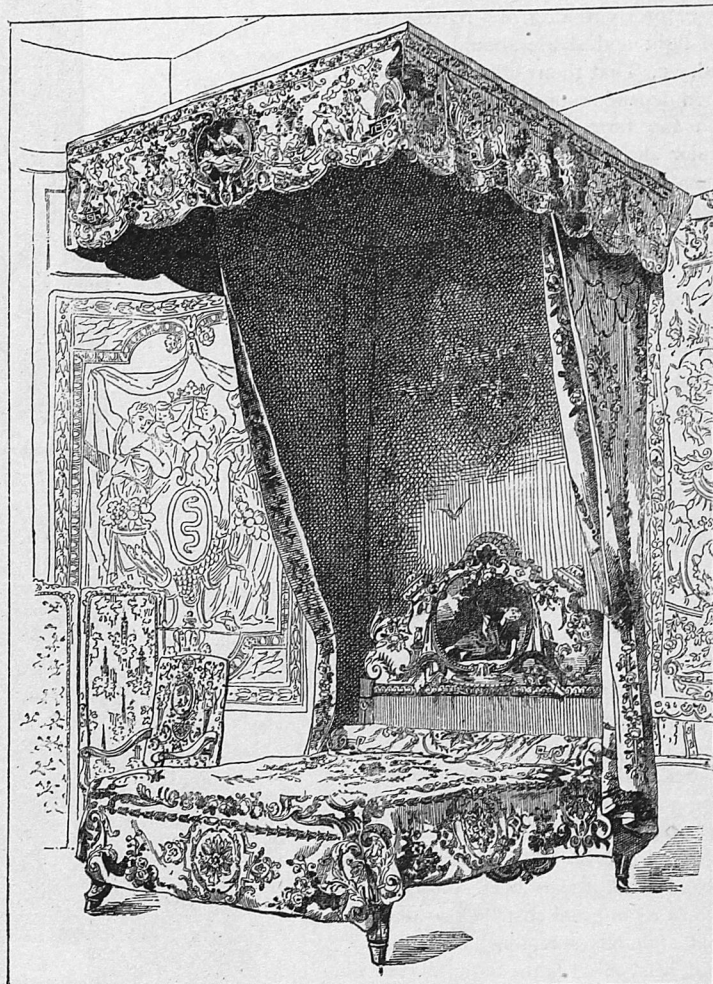
THE BED OF NAPOLEON I. EMPIRE STYLE.

screens or occasional tables; and the grand piano—that white elephant to the tasteful arranger—is not too conspicuously in the way. Up a few stairs we come to a

state bedroom, but though this is naïvely bright, we catch a glimpse of two canopied cots side by side. We know this is sacred ground and beat a retreat. The whole of the work was carried out from the suggestions and designs of Mr. J. Manning Cooper."

HOW WALL-PAPER IS MADE.

"THE Manufacture of Paper Hangings" was the subject of a paper read by Mr. F. Aumonier in London not long ago. Speaking of wall-papers printed from blocks by hand power only, he showed that almost all the processes were carried out by manual labor. The surface of the paper was first covered with the required



LOUIS QUATORZE BED.

color by two large, round brushes, and was then passed over twice with clean brushes, and hung up to dry. Satin grounds had two coats of a specially prepared color, which dried with a slight glaze, and was then dusted over with powdered talc and burnished by friction. After the ground was colored, the paper was printed by means of wooden blocks. On these blocks, of two thicknesses of deal, the pattern was cut, the ornament being left raised and the ground removed, and if the lines were delicate they were protected by strips of copper. These blocks were usually 21 inches square, and had little points at the corners for fitting successive impressions to each other. The block was dipped upon a surface of felt on which was spread the color, and was then laid on the paper, the pattern being transferred to the latter by the pressure of a lever on the block. When the pattern was composed of several colors, they were generally printed one at a time, the paper being slowly dried between each impression; but there were methods by which two or more colors could be printed simultaneously from one block. Mr. Aumonier showed some semi-transparent and opaque colors printed on mica grounds to produce silky effects—a process in this country. In flock papers the "flock" was wool, ground or cut to a fine powder, and left a natural color or dyed. The paper was printed with a sticky oil color in the usual patterns, and was then passed into a trough, where it was agitated while the flock dust was sifted upon it, and was then dried. In raised flocks the pattern was repainted and reflocked

from three to six times till the required relief was obtained. The author's patent embossed flocks were an extension of this process, carried to a further stage of development, and finally modelled in bas-relief by heated gun-metal dies under heavy pressure. Gilt paper consisted of two classes—those powdered with bronze and those treated with leaf-metal and lacquered. Leather paper was also stamped with a die after the pattern had been printed and the gilding had been applied.

MR. HARTE, an English architect, formulates the following principles: 1. That the ceiling being a flat surface, we should not seek to give it any other apparent form; therefore, all perspective, foreshortening, and representation of light and shade should be excluded. 2. That the result of any decoration depends more upon the color than on the form or ornament, and that color should take precedence of ornament. 3. That the ceiling, having no other structural purpose but a covering, allows for a freer and wider range of fancy in the decoration. 4. The use of figures or any pictorial representation whatever is not applicable. 5. That any scheme of decoration, other than a diaper or border treatment, should spring from the centre. 6. That the breaking up into panels, by mouldings or painted divisions, allows of more varied treatment in colors; and, lastly, that the most satisfactory decoration of the ceiling-flat as one panel—by other than hand-work—is that of a diaper terminating in a border with corners.

AMERICAN hard woods were but a few years since so plentiful and cheap that their merits were not fully appreciated. But now that they are becoming scarce and expensive they are beginning to be prized, and many instances can be cited where old hard wood furniture has been sold for many times its original cost. Of course the old style has something to do with it; but, after all, it is the material, the old mahogany, cherry, or oak, that is the real attraction. Reproductions of old-fashioned American pieces are made now from native hard woods in the same way as old-world furniture is so extensively copied.

MURAL DECORATION.

A FRESH instance of the unreliability of true fresco for decorative purposes in England, and of its absolute unfitness to stand the peculiar action of the London climate, has been lately afforded at the church of St. James-the-Less, Vauxhall Bridge Road. "Here," says The Artist, "a few years ago Mr. Watts, with that zealous striving after the nobler forms of art expression which has characterized his whole career, executed an important design in fresco. This painting, placed above the chancel arch, and consequently fully exposed to the evil influences of the heated and gas-polluted atmosphere, had so rapidly deteriorated that there was a short time ago but little of the original work discoverable even by the most careful observer. The whole design was shrouded in almost impenetrable darkness, the sooty accumulations during the comparatively brief period of its existence having sufficed to destroy it beyond any hope of restoration. Under these unhappy circumstances, and to save Mr. Watts's work from entire effacement, it was resolved to attempt its exact reproduction in glass mosaic, a decorative medium that has many advantages amid such surroundings and

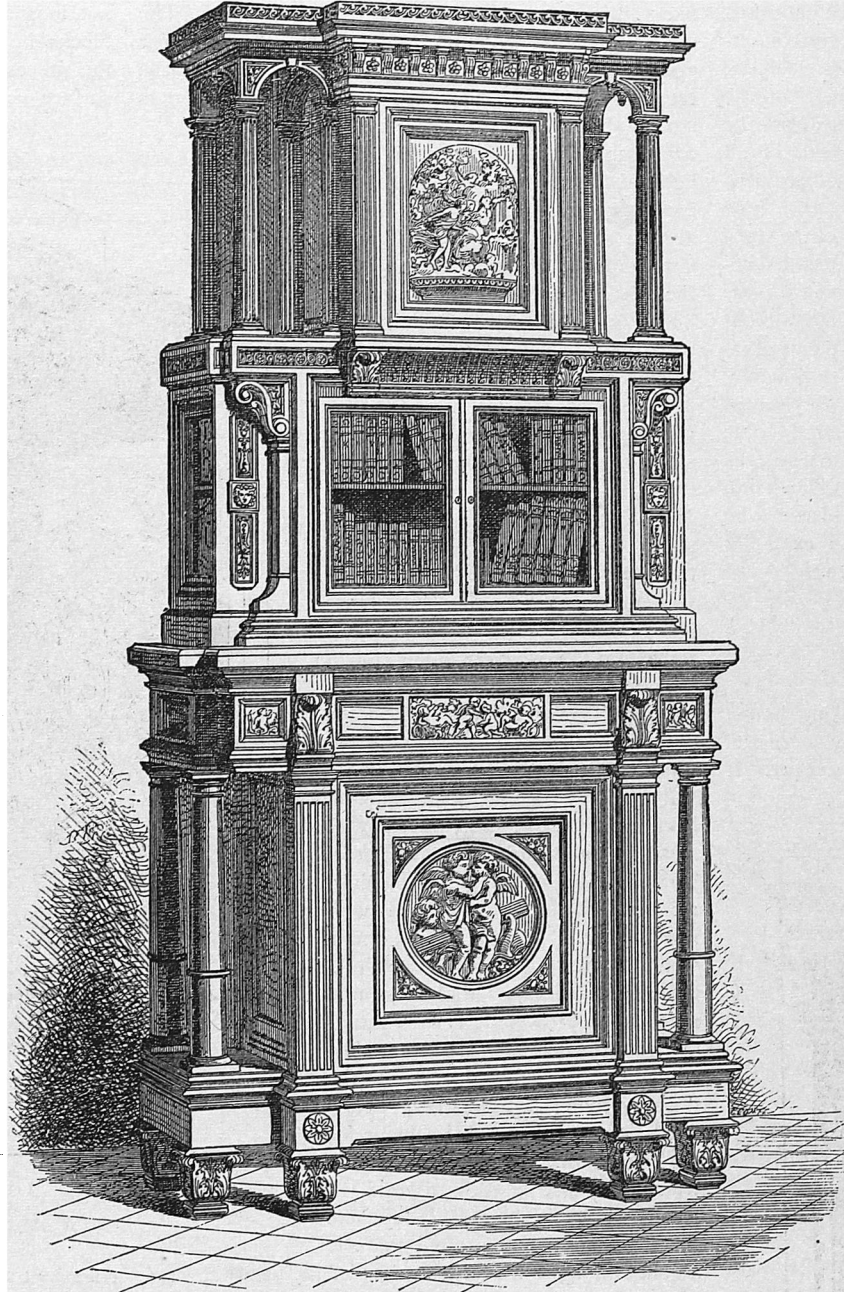
under such conditions as characterize the majority of the public buildings in London, and in our chief manufacturing towns. The fresco was accordingly carefully copied, under Mr. Watts's direction, by his pupil, Mr. Moore, and the drawing was entrusted to the Venice and Murano Company, to be by them transferred in this imperishable material to the wall on which the fast-fading fresco had been executed. Their share of the under-

all other and less reliable modes of pictorial expression. All have been tried, and with one exception have been found grievously wanting; this one exception is Mr. Gambier Parry's newly-invented process of spirit fresco, which has been employed by Sir Frederick Leighton in his two lunettes, 'The Arts of War' and 'The Arts of Peace,' in the South Kensington Museum, and also in his altar-piece in Lyndhurst Church. This last picture, which was executed some years ago, shows no sign of deterioration save in one corner, where moisture has penetrated the wall on which it is painted; but time alone will show whether the South Kensington lunettes will resist successfully the actively harmful influences of the London climate. Spirit fresco has over mosaic the undoubted advantage of greater range of tints and is susceptible of minuter finish and of more elaboration of surface. On these grounds it is of the two—if its power of endurance is beyond question—probably more suitable for decorative pictures of comparatively small scale, and which are viewed from but a short distance. For large wall surfaces, however, and for the filling of spaces far removed from the spectator's eye there can be no question of the superiority of mosaic over all other competitors. The range of tints is ample—some thousands are available—delicate gradations are actually possible, and the supreme advantages of unchangeable colors and of an imperishable surface are obtained. Moreover, a mosaic picture can be cleaned as easily and harmlessly as an ordinary window-pane, and this possibility is a point of some importance, when the most suitable form of decoration for buildings in every-day use has to be considered."

TAPESTRY, silk, damask, stamped leather, wicker-work, and many other materials are available for screens. One of the prettiest screens we have recently seen was a Japanese one of thorn twigs and split bamboo. The twigs were plaited into a likeness of the Japanese sacred mountain Fusi-yama, and the lighter colored bamboo represented the sky. One, a fire-screen, more suitable for an elegantly appointed room, was in Japanese partly cut velvet, with a polished and mottled bamboo frame. The single panel of velvet represented a mountain stream at night fringed by reeds, among which the wind was blowing and the rain beating. All was in tones of black and gray, and the picture was eminently calculated to enhance one's feeling of comfort by a suggestion of wild times out of doors. The price of this really artistic work was only ten dollars.

While near the fire, and upon the subject of Japanese art, let us describe an over-mantel cabinet which we saw recently. It was simply a neatly made pine box, with a shelf inside fastened by two big iron nails which had come out of a Japanese temple door, and were wrought into fir-cones. These served also for handles by which to lift the cabinet about. For doors there were three sliding panels of lattice-work ingeniously fastened by a catch, which could be locked and unlocked through the hole left for the sword-blade in an old iron sword-guard inserted in the middle panel. Instead of being filled with the customary useless bric-à-brac, this was stored with all the necessities for making and serving a social cup of tea. There was the hammered iron kettle, the tea-pot and cups of old Nan-kin, and the sugar-bowl of silver bronze, ready for use at a moment's notice, and just where they were required. An old lacquer tray stood on top, and rendered service, like the other things, on occasion.

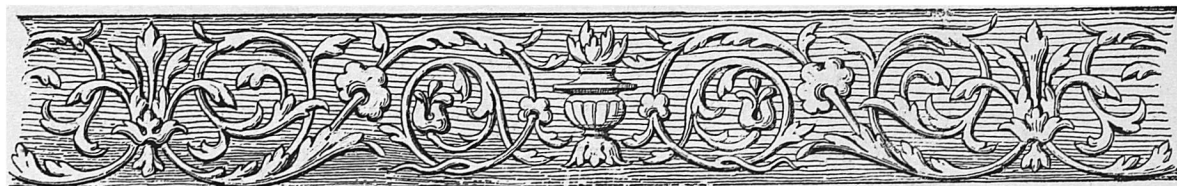
There are plenty of rude Japanese netsukés in the market worth about fifty cents apiece, and obtainable for that with a little haggling. They would make capital adjuncts to a bell-rope instead of or along with the old-fashioned tassel, and would likewise be useful on window-curtain guards and in other similar situations. The netsuké is a small carving of wood or ivory, generally amusing, and with holes in it, through which a cord may pass.



BOOKCASE AND CABINET, DESIGNED BY M. SAUVREZKY, PARIS.

taking was most successfully completed a few weeks ago, and it is now again possible to see and admire Mr. Watts's design, of which the original appearance has been imitated with entire fidelity.

"It is, indeed, a matter for congratulation that there should be at hand, and easily available, a process by which decorative works of any scale can be carried out without serious difficulty, and with a practical certainty of their remaining unimpaired for centuries; for even



CARVED BAND. FRENCH SIXTEENTH CENTURY WORK.

now we hear rumors that another great fresco by Mr. Watts, the 'School of Legislature,' in the hall of Lincoln's Inn, is far advanced toward obliteration, and a suggestion is being made that this work also should be saved from oblivion by timely reproduction in glass mosaic. In future we think artists who have entrusted to them the adornment of our public and private buildings will do wisely to abandon in favor of this material